

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USBERL 02756 221515Z
ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, PINT, WB, GW
SUBJECT: BERLIN REACTION TO FRG GOVERNMENT POLICY STATEMENT

REF: BONN 21238

1. SUMMARY: REACTION IN BERLIN TO THAT PORTION OF
CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT'S POLICY STATEMENT OF DECEMBER 17
DEALING WITH BERLIN HAS GENERALLY BEEN NEGATIVE. LOCAL
OBSERVERS CONSIDERED SCHMIDT'S COMMENTS LUKEWARM,
LACKING IN ORIGINALITY AND RESERVED, ALTHOUGH FOR OBVIOUS
REASONS. GOVERNING MAYOR SCHUETZ WELCOMED CHANCELLOR'S
COMMENTS. BECAUSE OF WHAT IS SEEN AS CHANCELLOR'S CONTINUING
DISINTEREST IN BERLIN, SOME POLITICAL EXPERTS HERE BELIEVE
THAT SCHUETZ MAY FILL THE POLICY VACUUM AND TO AN
INCREASING DEGREE REPRESENT BERLIN'S INTERESTS INTERNATIONALLY.
END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 USBERL 02756 221515Z

2. POLICY DECLARATION BY CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT CONTAINED
BRIEF PASSAGE ON BERLIN; GIVEN EXTREME LENGTH OF SCHMIDT'S
STATEMENT, BREVITY OF BERLIN PARAGRAPH ALL
THE MORE NOTICEABLE. NEWSPAPERS IN BERLIN, PARTICULARLY
THOSE ORIENTED TOWARD CDU, CRITICIZED SCHMIDT'S
STATEMENT AS EFFORT TO MINIMIZE POLITICAL PROBLEMS

BY CONCENTRATING ON ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF CITY'S FUTURE.

3. NO ONE DOUBTS IN BERLIN THAT, AS SCHMIDT SAID, CITY WILL REMAIN A BAROMETER FOR EAST-WEST RELATIONS. HOWEVER, OPPOSITION LEADER LORENZ POINTED OUT THAT COMMENT ON BERLIN SITUATION THAT SCHMIDT (IN LORENZ'S WORDS) "PERMITTED" TO APPEAR IN HIS POLICY STATEMENT, OFFERED NO HOPE FOR AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE CURRENT SITUATION. CDU BUNDESTAG MEMBER WOHLRABE WAS ALSO CRITICAL AND EMPHASIZED THAT BERLIN MUST NOT ONLY BE MAINTAINED BUT "FILLED WITH LIFE"; HE ADDED THAT CITY EXPECTED CHANCELLOR TO EMPHASIZE TIES BETWEEN FRG AND BERLIN, NOT TO HINDER THEM. (THIS WAS REFERENCE TO NATIONAL FOUNDATION).

4. GOVERNING MAYOR SCHUETZ TRIED TO ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE BY CALLING SCHMIDT'S STATEMENT A "CONVINCING AND WELL-FOUNDED DECLARATION OF SOLIDARITY WITH BERLIN" WHICH WAS A SOLID BASIS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN CITY. MAYOR AND ECONOMICS SENATOR LUEDER WELCOMED INDICATION IN SCHMIDT'S STATEMENT THAT ECONOMIC VIABILITY WOULD BECOME EMPHASIS OF FUTURE BERLIN POLICY OF FRG GOVERNMENT.

5. ANOTHER CRITIC, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESIDENT ELFE, CALLED SCHMIDT'S REMARKS ON BERLIN "PARTICULARLY DISAPPOINTING." ELFE REJECTED IMPLICATION THAT PRIVATE INDUSTRY WOULD HAVE TO BEAR PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPROVING BERLIN'S ECONOMIC VIABILITY AND CRITICIZED SCHMIDT FOR NOT MAKING THIS CLEAR.
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PAGE 03 USBERL 02756 221515Z

5. STATEMENT BY NEW BUNDESTAG PRESIDENT CARSTENS ABOUT INCREASING TIES TO BERLIN HAS AWAKENED LITTLE INTEREST. REVELATION BY CARSTENS THAT ALL THREE PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUSES WOULD BE VISITING BERLIN IN NEAR FUTURE (SPD JANUARY 31/FEBRUARY 1; CDU/CSU FEBRUARY 7 AND 8; AND FDP FEBRUARY 28/MARCH 1) WAS NOT NEW. CARSTENS' SUGGESTION THAT HE WOULD BE DOING ALL THAT HE COULD, WITHIN POSSIBILITIES AFFORDED BY QA, TO STRENGTHEN BUNDESTAG COMMITTEE WORK IN BERLIN WAS MET WITH SKEPTICISM BY RATHAUS OFFICIALS. CHANCELLERY CHIEF HERZ TOLD MISOFF THAT CARSTENS' RECORD IN PAST SUGGESTED THAT CARSTENS WOULD CONTINUE TO BE VERY CAUTIOUS WITH RESPECT TO INNOVATIONS IN BERLIN-BONN TIES.

7. SOME COMMENTATORS HAVE NOTED THAT SCHMIDT'S CONTINUING DISINTEREST IN BERLIN, WHICH THEY SEE

REFLECTED IN DECEMBER 17 POLICY STATEMENT, HAS CREATED OPPORTUNITY FOR GOVMAYOR SCHUETZ TO PLAY ROLE ON INTERNATIONAL STAGE. THEY FEEL THAT IN ORDER TO "FILL THE VACUUM" ON BERLIN POLICY LEFT BY SCHMIDT, SCHEUTZ, MIGHT BE EXPECTED TO REPRESENT CITY'S INTERESTS IN INTERNATIONAL ARENA MORE DIRECTLY. WE THINK THAT CONTINUING ANTIPATHY OF CHANCELLOR AND GOV MAYOR FOR ONE ANOTHER AND SHUTZ'S REALIZATION THAT FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE (I.E. AS LONG AS SCHMIDT IS CHANCELLOR) HE CAN ASPIRE TO NO JOB OUTSIDE OF BERLIN, MAY WELL CAUSE SCHUETZ TO CARRY BERLIN'S CASE TO WORLD WHENEVER HE THINKS FRG POLICY (PARTICULARLY TOWARD SOVIETS AND EAST EUROPE) DISADVANTAGES CITY.

8. IN THIS CONNECTION, COUNSELLOR OF SOVIET EMBASSY IN EAST BERLIN, KHOTULEV, TOLD POLAD DAVIS AT SOCIAL FUNCTION ON DEC. 17 THAT SOVIETS WERE "VERY SATISFIED" WITH INDICATION IN SCHMIDT'S DECLARATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 USBERL 02756 221515Z

TION THAT FRG POLICY TOWARD BERLIN "WILL NOT CHANGE."
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